

Washington, D.C. -- Congressman Jeff Fortenberry this week introduced the Rural Housing Preservation Act (H.R. 858), which helps hundreds of rural communities across the nation address the challenge of affordable housing.

"Adequate and affordable housing is often a challenge in our rural communities," Fortenberry said. "This legislation would help keep rural communities eligible to compete for assistance in important housing programs."

As a result of the 2010 Census data, many communities currently eligible for United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development programs could be cut off from what is often their only source of federal housing funding.

The Rural Housing Preservation Act represents a common-sense solution by preserving the definition of "rural" under current law until 2020 Census data is available. For communities across the nation, including some in Nebraska, this change could mean the difference between continued economic struggle and a stronger recovery.

The legislation has no impact on the federal deficit and it only continues eligibility for USDA Rural Development programs, not funding. The communities must continue to apply for funding on a competitive basis.

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